

AUGUST MAYOR'S MESSAGE

MAYOR'S JOURNEY

In January 2012, I had been retired for nearly eight years from a 30-year career that was the fulfillment of a boyhood dream. After flying all over this beautiful country, retirement was now made up of the expression, "you wake up every morning with nothing to do and you go to bed with only half of it done."

At 65 years of age, I considered myself someone who has been blessed with wonderful health my entire life, and I had no reason to assume that wouldn't continue. Not until my annual physical of that year when it was detected that I had that dreaded disease that seems to change people's lives. The farthest thing from my mind was having to deal with advanced cancer. But throughout that year, we did the traditional treatment of chemotherapy and radiation. Then in November 2012, we got the phone call that exceeded our expectations. We were cancer free! Following the expressions of gratitude, excitement and appreciation I presented a proposal to my wife, Ruth. I said, "We have raised our family, completed my career, and will soon be done with an assignment at our church, so what would you think if I seriously consider the promptings of a few friends and run for mayor?" I knew from 40 years of marriage, that once the shock wore off, she would support me in even my craziest ideas, and once again she did not disappoint. All of 2013 was spent being involved in the political campaign, which I knew nothing about, it was a whole different world. However, I found it absolutely fascinating.

After winning the primary and subsequently being elected mayor, I found myself in a position where the learning curve was nearly vertical. But each month was more fascinating, challenging and rewarding than the one before. We had lived in Murray for 30 years and had always thought it was the finest community in the country. Now I was given the opportunity to find out why, and what made it so.

In past articles, I have pointed out all the things that make our community so unique, but now I see the true common thread; it is the people. The department heads, the City Council, the senior staff, the employees and most of all the residents. People who love living in a city that feels like a small town oasis in a big city metropolitan area. Citizens that love their parks, respect their history, enjoy the conveniences of a central location, great shopping, wonderful businesses and world-class medical facilities.

Personally, however, for the past two years, I have had to renew that battle with cancer. And now I find myself at the end of the most rewarding period of my life. I have a deeper love for our city than ever before and an appreciation for all those that I have met along the way. I have a renewed respect for elected public officials that have dedicated so much of their time and talents to make our lives better.

We are once again in that political climate where a new mayor will be chosen. I know what the candidates are going through and the challenges and opportunities they face. However, I also understand how critical this particular mayoral campaign is to the future of our city. I wish them well, but I appreciate the firm foundation Murray has in every aspect and I have complete confidence that we will continue to be a city without equal, and one that others envy. Thank you for the privilege of serving as your mayor. I will be forever grateful for the relationships and friends I have made along the way--these memories that will last beyond a lifetime.

